IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claims 1-2 and 12-13 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please AMEND the claims as follows:

1. (CANCELED)

2. (CANCELED)

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A stapler including

a horizontal base,

an operation handle,

a staple striking blade plate, and

a staple mount magazine with which is mounted a connected staple assembly cassette having a case body and a connected staple assembly composed of a number of staples disposed in the case body, said horizontal base, said operation handle and said staple mount magazine being coupled by means of pivot shaft member,

wherein said staple striking blade plate has an upper portion connected to the operation handle and is disposed between the operation handle and the horizontal base, the staple striking blade plate being vertically movable in association with an operation of the operation handle, and the staple striking blade plate has a vertical width such that when the operation handle is pushed down in a direction of the horizontal base, a lower end thereof reaches a surface of the horizontal base,

said staple mount magazine has a mount case, a feed mechanism and a staple lowering slit, said mount case serving to vertically hold the connected staple assembly of a number of staples each having substantially U-shape having a right angled corner portion, having a structure in which both lower end of the bent staple is directed to the horizontal base, and having one end side and another end side so as to be mounted in a range from a front end to a rear end of the stapler,

said one end side is mounted to the rear end side of the connected staple assembly, and said the other end side is mounted to the front end portion of the connected staple assembly and provided with the staple lowering slit as a blade plate passage,

said staple lowering slit is formed with an opening so as to guide, in the lowering direction, the staple which is separated from the front end of the connected staple assembly and

lowered in the slit,

said feed mechanism includes a mount sensor, a pusher piece, a pusher piece engaging member, a pusher piece traction spring, and a release lever rotating plate, said mount sensor having a structure being displaced and deformed by sensing presence or absence of the connected staple assembly,

said pusher piece engaging member engages the pusher piece and releases the engaged pusher piece under the condition of the displacement and deformation of the mount sensor,

said pusher traction spring elastically pulls the pusher piece in the other end side in the staple mount magazine,

said release lever rotating plate is mounted directly below the mount sensor and serves to detect, as a rear end sensing sensor, the passing of the rear end of the connected staple assembly accommodated in the connected staple assembly cassette, and

said pusher piece moves from the one end side toward the other end side in the staple mount magazine as an advance passage, the pusher piece is subjected to elastic traction force in the direction towards the other end side by the pusher piece traction spring and advances in the advance passage when the engaged pusher piece is released, and the rear end of the connected staple assembly is formed to be elastically pressed in the direction towards the other end side of the mount case,

wherein said pusher piece engaging member comprises:

a horizontal lock door including a release wall, said release wall releasing the pusher piece when it is engaged and locked,

a first horizontal rotation shaft and a second horizontal rotation shaft, facing each other, and positioned in one line to engage and lock the pusher piece, and

a guide projection positioned on one end of said horizontal lock door and a lock projection positioned on an other end of said horizontal lock door, to guide said pusher piece to its stopping position after the stapling operation completes.

4. (ORIGINAL) The stapler according to claim 3, wherein said feed mechanism is provided with a rear end sensing sensor sensing passing of the rear end of the connected staple assembly at the rear end of the mount magazine at a time of mounting the staple assembly cassette and being displaced and deformed by sensing the passing, and said pusher piece

engaging member is provided with releasing means for releasing the engagement with the pusher piece under the condition of the displacement and deformation of the rear end sensing sensor.

5. (ORIGINAL) The stapler according to claim 4, said rear end sensing sensor commonly serves as the mount sensor.

6. (CANCELED)

7. (CANCELED)

8. (CANCELED)

9. (CANCELED)

10. (CANCELED)

11. (CANCELED)

12. (CANCELED)

13. (CANCELED)

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The stapler according to claim 3, wherein said release lever rotating plate comprises:

a square portion located in ~~the~~ a center of the release lever rotating plate, secured to ~~the~~ a first extension of one end side of a first side wall section of the feed mechanism;

a rear end sensing arm extending vertically upward from an upper end portion of the square-shaped portion;

wherein ~~the~~ a front end of the rear end sensing arm projects into the advance passage of the pusher piece, and

wherein the rear end sensing arm is engaged with a second stop arm to allow the mounting sensor to be disengagable in the rotating direction; and

a release arm including a ~~first~~ traction coil spring, the ~~first~~ traction coil spring drawing the release arm in its longitudinal direction.